Handbook on

Inter-Municipal Partnership

and

Co-operation

for

Municipal Government

Table of Contents

Introduction 1

Definition and Legal Considerations of Partnership 1

Benefits of Inter-Municipal Agreements 2

Guidelines 2

Evaluation 6

Conclusion 7

Focus Group 8

Appendices

Appendix "A" - Survey Questions 11

Appendix "B" -Sample Listing of "Best Practices" Web Sites ... 12

Appendix "C" - Examples of Inter-Municipal Agreements 18

106-04740/

Introduction. . .

This handbook is an initiative brought about during the November 2002 annual conference of the Union of Nova Scotia Municipalities (UNSM). The UNSM and Service Nova Scotia and Municipal Relations joined together in an effort to promote greater voluntary cooperation between municipalities. The goals of both organizations in this initiative is to maximize resources and enhance service delivery in municipal government.

Research carried out in support of this project included administration of an on-line Inter-Municipal Cooperation survey for which almost 100% response was received.

The willingness of municipal government decision makers to take time to complete the survey questionnaire demonstrated a high level of commitment to the concept of cooperation. Information collected through the survey indicates the extent of cooperation between municipalities throughout Nova Scotia is significant. Cooperative initiatives include: the sharing of water supply systems; sewage collection and maintenance; solid waste management; emergency services; electricity provision; public transit; property inspections; personal and property protection; equipment sharing; road maintenance and the sharing of technical expertise.

Definition and legal considerations

Definition and legal considerations of partnership:

The term "cooperative agreement" or " inter-municipal partnership", may be broadly defined as a relationship based upon mutual understanding and trust that is entered into between municipalities. The Municipal Government Act describes an inter-municipal agreement in Sections 60, and 61.

> *"A municipality or a village may agree with one or more municipalities, villages, service commissions, the Government of the Province or of Canada or a department or agency of either of them or a band council pursuant to the Indian Act (Canada) to provide or administer municipal or village services."*

Depending on how it is structured, it may also involve one or more government, private sector party, or community groups. The concept of inter-municipal partnerships involving organizations other than municipalities should be considered by decision makers when reviewing the possibilities of delivering or receiving services through cooperative agreements.

Agreements may be formal or informal. Most often they evolve from a desire to maximize resources in order to meet complementary or compatible objectives. The result, whatever the nature of the service being provided or secured, can be a win-win arrangement for each of the participants.

Use of the term "partnership" presupposes the existence of a formal or contractual agreement. It is important to be aware that in a legal partnership the partners jointly assume certain legal responsibilities. As a general rule, if one of the partners cannot meet its commitments (including financial commitments) the other partners may be required to make up the shortfall. If one of the partners incurs debts related to the undertaking, the other partners are jointly accountable. If legal action is taken against one or all of the partners, each is jointly liable. The term partnership, then, needs to be used with caution in verbal and written communications when establishing cooperative arrangements. In some situations it may be better for municipalities to use terms such as cooperation, collaboration or networking.

Benefits of Inter-Municipal Cooperation. . .

Whatever the form of cooperative arrangement or partnership that exists, normally the undertaking will involve the following four main components:

1. A sharing of roles and responsibilities,
2. Contributions from each participant of human, financial, technological, or material and structural resources,
3. A sharing of risk, control and benefits,
4. Added value in products and/or services.

Most often cooperative arrangements result in actual dollar savings, improved or sustained delivery of services or programs, and an enhanced ability to share costs and skills.

The process of partnership encourages compromise, consultation, evaluation, strategic planning, and goal setting. It optimizes use of knowledge and know-how of the partnering municipalities, helps to eliminate duplication of effort, and promotes a culture of organizational co-operation. Cooperative arrangements are a natural offshoot of the bench marking and best practices process.

Guidelines for Inter-Municipal Agreements. . .

When investigating the potential of inter-municipal agreements for service delivery, there are a number of steps that should be undertaken during the preliminary and planning stages.

Step 1. Prepare a list of current or previous inter-municipal cooperative arrangements that your municipality has been involved in. Review each item in detail and note positive and negative aspects of each situation in order to determine how that arrangement could have been improved. Determine if establishing a partnership for service delivery is the most efficient and cost-effective way for your municipality to solve the problem, to address the need, or to take advantage of the opportunity.

Step 2. Develop an inventory of resources that your municipality might share with another municipality. Such a list might include human resources, facilities, equipment or programs. Are there services that your municipality currently provides that are working exceptionally well in your community that you may be in a position to offer to share with a neighbour?

Step 3. Determine which of your neighbouring municipalities might be potential partners in a cooperative or partnership arrangement. For example, you have a need for new snow clearing equipment, however ,one of your neighbouring communities has already acquired new equipment and has the capacity to provide this service to your municipality. An arrangement could be made between the two municipalities to share the equipment and the human resources required to operate it, resulting in significant savings for both municipalities. The downside of such an arrangement might be the increased time involved for having the streets cleaned, but the priority for which streets to be done in what order could be negotiated in advance so that such issues are addressed to the satisfaction of all parties involved before they might arise.

If more than one of your neighbouring municipalities is in a position to be a potential partner, list the pros and cons and possible issues involved in establishing a cooperative arrangement with each, then determine the most preferable arrangement based on the individual circumstances.

Determine if potential partners have the political authority, motivation, and resources to become involved in a cooperative arrangement.

Step 4. Be prepared before you approach a potential partner by doing extensive research prior to making any commitment. Find out what similar arrangements may have been made in other areas - locally, nationally, and internationally, and take advantage of the experience gained by others who have undertaken similar agreements. Consider the statutory authority for agreements for municipal services. Section 60 of the MGA can be used like a checklist when considering inter-municipal or inter-governmental agreements and section 61 provides authority for agreements with private parties.

As a part of advance planning, prepare a proposal outlining the anticipated benefits for each potential participant. Approach your potential partners to arrange for a meeting to discuss the opportunities for cooperative arrangements, and provide your potential partner with your proposal in advance of the meeting in order to give them the opportunity to consider their options, and the pros and cons as you have outlined them.

Step 5. The background research has been completed, potential partners have been selected and have agreed to enter into a cooperative arrangement. Now there are a number of things that can be done to ensure a good working arrangement:

✓ Define the problem, need or opportunity

When working out the details of the agreement articulate clearly what the expectations are. Include a definition of the problem, need or opportunity to be addressed using clear plain language. Identify all the stakeholders who might be affected by such an agreement, and indicate what is expected of each participant so that there is no confusion or lack of clarity later. Ensure that the decision makers in each municipality are aware of the implications both positive and negative of entering into the agreement, and are clear on the costs and obligations for each partner in terms of financial, material, equipment, infrastructure, or human resource commitments. Ensure all potential partners share the same view of the situation and that the partnership under discussion will meet the needs of all concerned.

✓ Identify all the stakeholders

Who will be affected by the agreement? Outline clearly what is expected of each participant so that there is no confusion or lack of clarity later.

✓ Communication

Ensure that the decision makers in each municipality are aware of the implications both positive and negative of entering into the agreement, and are clear on the costs and obligations for each partner in terms of financial, material, equipment, infrastructure, or human resource commitments. Ensure all potential partners share the same view of the situation and that the partnership under discussion will meet the needs of all concerned.

Decisions should not be made in isolation. Approach potential partners with options, not decisions, and be prepared to listen to the other's perspective. Be flexible and open to suggestions from those who might have a slightly different take on the situation and may have innovative suggestions.

✓ Contingency planning

Cover all foreseeable situations. Do not rely on assumptions to determine how things will be handled in a crisis, rather, have a contingency plan for situations that might arise and be prepared to deal with unexpected events. Contingency plans should clearly indicate who "has ownership", who will have the ultimate decision making authority in order to deal with a crisis quickly and efficiently.

✓ Negotiations

Perhaps most important, negotiate honestly, openly and fairly. Know your own position well, and be aware of what you can and cannot bring to the arrangement. Be sure your partner is aware of these things as well. Be flexible, a little give and take on both sides will result in a more satisfactory arrangement for all involved.

Step 6. There are many administrative matters that will require attention when considering, or entering into, an inter-municipal agreement. Establish a chain of authority. Determine and agree upon a management arrangement. Outline what needs to be done in order to achieve the listed objectives. This involves identifying and recording all of the tasks, sub-tasks and other activities that must be carried out in order to fulfill the terms of the anticipated partnership, and who will be responsible for each. It is important that each partner understands its decision-making authority and that roles and responsibilities are assigned

on the basis of knowledge and know-how (not according to financial capacity or power). The roles and responsibilities should be assigned equitably among the partners so that no one partner is, or appears to be, able to exercise control over the others. Specify the areas of autonomy and interdependence for each. This will include defining the limits of what each partner can do without the approval or knowledge of the other partners. A conscious effort will be required to consult each other on issues that require all partner agreement, such as budget, timetable, and replacement of key personnel.

Determine the procedures for decision making. In the area of multi-partner partnerships, it is even more important to decide in advance the way in which decisions are to be made - by consensus, majority vote, open or secret balloting, or other manner. Sometimes there are different decision making processes for different kinds of questions. For example, do financial decisions have to go back to each partner for approval? In the case of disagreement or conflict between the individual partners it is beneficial to provide for a conciliation or conflict resolution process.

Communications are essential in any working relationship. Identify the different means that will be used for exchanging and disseminating information. A process should be established that ensures all of the partners have prompt, efficient means of communicating among themselves. A schedule of meetings should be drawn up accommodating the availability of each partner. Include e-mail, discussion lists, newsletters, formal or informal meetings, telephone conferencing etc. in the communication plan. Additionally, each of the partners should have mechanisms established within their own organizations to keep decision makers internally informed of issues or developments that can have an impact on the partnership.

Determine the rights of ownership, use, distribution and visibility, of any technology or services that may be delivered by means of the partnership. Depending on the type of product or service that will result from the partnership, some consideration will need to be given to who will retain ownership of each particular asset, and these ownership issues should be clearly defined in the formal agreement. Seek expert or legal opinion when necessary.

Specify the conditions governing the admission or withdrawal of a partner. The procedure that is to be followed when a potential new partner is admitted to the arrangement, or the appropriate compensation that is to be paid if one of the partners withdraws, should be defined in the agreement so that all stakeholders are aware of the arrangements.

Ensure that the municipality's finance experts and legal advisors, review draft agreements and are satisfied that the arrangements meet the needs of the municipality prior to formalizing agreements. Make sure your advisors know what the municipality's goals and concerns are. The timetable for the project should be compatible with the needs of each partner.

Financial obligations concerning any commitments should be in line with the strategic and financial plans for the municipality. Cost benefit and risk analysis should be carried out and reviewed to ensure the project is in line with projected costs and benefits, and that each partner has sufficient resources to meet their obligations.

Copies of the draft agreement should be circulated to each participating municipal council to ensure that all expectations have been addressed and that council members are fully versed on the project and its ramifications. When finalized, obtain each council's endorsement of the agreement vis a vis a formally adopted motion.

In order to maximize the return on investment, it is essential that resources are managed carefully. In an inter-municipal cooperative project it becomes even more essential to do the appropriate preliminary work, and to maintain careful oversight on the project as it progresses.

Evaluation

Evaluation is a critical phase of any project or partnership. There are a number of ways to approach this part of the process and the actual evaluation process may differ depending upon the circumstances. However, there are three main areas to consider in any post project evaluation.

Conceptually: Review the overall partnership to assess the way that the partnership worked.

- ✓ Were the objectives realistic, relevant, and have they been met to each participants satisfaction?
- ✓ Are there areas that did not meet each partners expectations?
- ✓ What could have been done differently to improve the overall effectiveness of the initiative?
- ✓ What might be done at this point to improve efficiency and effectiveness?
- ✓ What might be some lessons learned for the next time?
- ✓ Did the partnership enhance the activities, programs, services or products of each partner in addition to the actual result accomplished by the partnership?

Financially: Review the cost benefit and risk analysis.

- ✓ Were there surprises that could have been more effectively and efficiently dealt with?
- ✓ Did the project meet financial expectations?

- ✓ Did the partnership provide the projected benefits within the budget?
- ✓ If there were budget overruns identify why this occurred, and how they could have been avoided.
- ✓ Will each partner realize the expected return on their investment?

Administratively: Review the project administration to ensure that the project has been effectively managed.

- ✓ Was the work plan accurate in view of the estimated timetable, budget, implementation etc?
- ✓ Did each partner meet their obligations?
- ✓ Were the control measures appropriate and sufficient?
- ✓ Was the communication plan effective and were all participants satisfied with the information provided?
- ✓ Have steps been taken to communicate and convey the know-how and practices that proved successful?

Recognize accomplishment! Report on best practices, successes and expertise gained!

Conclusion. . .

Despite the most careful planning, unexpected events occur in any undertaking. With good communications, cooperation and flexibility most issues can be addressed with a minimum of disruption to the schedule and a minor impact on the projected budget. Conscientious attention to details in the planning and negotiation phases of a project, dedication and enthusiasm can contribute immensely to the successful outcome of inter-municipal cooperative projects. It is hoped that the contents of this guide on inter-municipal cooperation and partnership will prove helpful to municipalities planning to embark on such an effort. Service Nova Scotia and Municipal Relations may be able to provide advice and assistance in the planning stages of inter-municipal cooperative agreements, please contact the Department for further information.

Focus Group Report. . .

Focus Group Discussion

The Focus Group workshop sponsored by Service Nova Scotia and Municipal Relations provided a wealth of information on intermunicipal cooperation in the province. Workshop participants stressed the significant level of cooperation, formal and informal, that currently occurs in Nova Scotia municipal government.

It should be noted that while intermunicipal agreements may be the best solution in some circumstances, in other situations it may not be the only, or even the best option for a municipality to pursue.

- Individual municipalities regularly engage in the development of policies, by-laws, job descriptions and other documentation necessary for effective management and administration. While surveys are sometimes carried out to ascertain what may be the practice in other municipalities throughout the region, municipal decision makers seldom consider undertaking the work on a regional basis.

- Frequently municipalities receive requests from the Province, the Union of Nova Scotia Municipalities, the Federation of Canadian Municipalities, as well as other organizations, to review and comment on existing or proposed legislation, and a variety of other issues. Municipalities often cannot respond to these requests in as timely a manner as they would like due to time constraints and a lack of resources. It was suggested that more attention should be placed on providing an opportunity for all stakeholders to become involved in a meaningful way in the discussion and consideration of emerging issues affecting municipalities.

- Governance and control were identified as significant issues in inter-municipal cooperation. When partners undertake a project jointly, some loss of control over expenditures and service level can be expected. There is a real tendency that the partner contributing the most financially may underestimate the contributions, financial or otherwise, of the other partner.

- Significant benefits may be achieved from municipalities pooling financial and human resources to harmonize policies, job descriptions, and salary scales.

- Recreation programming and delivery, web site development and maintenance, human resource management and purchasing are areas inter-municipal cooperation may prove beneficial and can utilized to enhance existing programs.

- Water quality testing was noted as another potential cooperative initiative that could prove beneficial to the private sector as well as municipalities.

- Focus Group participants identified potential areas where both municipalities and the Province could benefit from cooperative arrangements for service delivery. For example snow plowing equipment clearing provincial roads may travel through a town with the

plow not in use in order to reach a nearby area where road clearing is resumed.

- It was stressed by focus group participants that cooperative initiatives that are undertaken voluntarily are preferable to forced or legislated initiatives.

- Participants suggested the development of a continually updated inventory of intermunicipal cooperation examples in the province would be helpful in bench marking and best practices. Such an inventory would ideally provide sufficient detail to illustrate what approaches work well, and what other approaches had less than satisfactory results and why.

- Shared or joint management services through the use of one management team has been a successful initiative for some municipalities in the province. However, municipalities considering this option should keep in mind that there is a substantial increase in workload on senior management. Individual Councils continue to meet and require agendas, minutes etc, which contribute to the workload of the management team. Potential problems may arise when partnering Councils' have competing needs and priorities.

The workshop participants emphasised that a number of different models for cooperation exist, and one that may work well in one situation may not be appropriate elsewhere. Many such successful formalized arrangements for intermunicipal cooperation currently exist in Nova Scotia. It was also emphasised that cooperation often works well without formal agreements or contracts, and such informal cooperation between municipalities should be encouraged whenever possible.

Flexibility was identified as a contributing factor, and can often be the key to a successful undertaking. Caution was expressed that legislation governing municipal government should not be overly prescriptive so that flexibility can allow for innovative approaches to intermunicipal cooperation. Participants suggested that greater liaison between the Province and municipal government is essential.

Focus group discussions with municipal leaders - senior management and Councillors - identified a number of areas where cooperation between municipalities has worked well, and emphasized the need for concise, easy to read basic information that can help navigate successful cooperative undertakings from concept through to reality. Several additional areas were outlined as having potential for future cooperative initiatives.

Focus Group suggestions for municipal cooperation and joint management initiatives		
Council and Policy Making Operations Legislative review Common by-laws, policies and job descriptions Governance structures Training and professional development initiatives Information technology - research, systems development, etc. Lobbying and advocacy **Overall Management** Management functions - i.e. CAO or joint directors Financial systems Procurement practices and policies Purchase and or sale of services Use of assets Human resource management and benefit packages **Public Works, Transportation and Environment** Water testing facilities Water utilities and water supply Equipment Technical expertise Sewer collection and treatment Street paving Crosswalk painting Snow clearing Solid waste management Electric utilities Public transit Watershed protection plans	**Economic Development and Planning** RDA's/chambers of commerce/boards of trade Industrial parks Planning and economic development staff Marketing/promotion/sales/ and revenue sharing Development and/or sharing of infrastructure **Recreation, Culture and Tourism** Staff training initiatives Equipment purchase and sharing Municipal recreation facilities School board facilities for municipal recreation purposes Tourism associations Recreation programming Trails development Community events and festivals Marketing/promotion and revenue generation On-line scheduling of courses, registration and revenue collection Information sharing and links to web sites	**Protection and Enforcement** Inspection services By-law enforcement Policing Fire protection Emergency services Dispatch services Civic addressing Detention facilities Equipment sharing Training **Information Technology and E-Commerce** Web site development and maintenance Systems and software review, development and maintenance Records management Technical expertise Alternate service delivery - private sector **Training and Professional Development** Needs identification and delivery Open enrolment training Program and research development fund

Appendix "A"

Inter-Municipal Survey Questions

The survey was administered on-line to all municipalities and villages in Nova Scotia. Questions asked, included:

Does your municipality provide services, under contract or by agreement, to other municipalities?

Does your municipality receive services, under contract or by agreement, from other municipalities?

Does your municipality share or provide any of its staff resources to regularly assist another municipality with service delivery functions?

Does your municipality share or make available its equipment or facilities for use in the delivery of services to another municipality? (Examples - recreation facilities, office equipment, meeting rooms, ...)

Does your municipality have inter-municipal arrangements or agreements in place which provide for the shared delivery of one or more areas of municipal government services?

Appendix "B"

Sample Listing of Best Practices Web Sites and Related Information

The Internet provides access to literally hundreds of thousands of web sites containing information that can be of assistance to municipal government decision makers. The following are a few that have been selected as a starting point when looking for information on best practices in municipal government.

The Service Nova Scotia and Municipal Relations (SNSMR) web site contains links to third-party web sites, which are not under the control of Service Nova Scotia and Municipal Relations. SNSMR makes no representations whatsoever about any other web site to which you may have access through this web site. When you access a non SNSMR web site, you do so at your own risk and SNSMR is not nor will be responsible for the accuracy or reliability of any information, data, opinions, advice, or statements made on these sites. SNSMR provides these links merely as a convenience and the inclusion of such links does not imply that SNSMR endorses or accepts any responsibility for the content or uses of such web sites.

NOTE: Web site URL's are accurate at the time of this Handbook's preparation.

Government of Alberta Web Site
http://www3.gov.ab.ca/ma/ms/RegParShip/success.cfm
Contains information on successful Regional Partnerships in Alberta.
Example: The Calgary Regional Partnership: A group of 13 partners in the Calgary region wish to develop a regional identity, vision, and organizational structure. This exercise will review a spectrum of options from casual cooperation to a more structured regional forum. The partnership will select the model that best meets its regional goals. This partnership is also developing regional projects in the areas of transportation, emergency services, environmental management, and economic development. These projects, or regional priorities, have been selected to benefit residents and businesses in the Calgary region by protecting those qualities about the region that are cherished, while planning a bold new future.

Municipal Research and Services Centre of Washington
http://www.mrsc.org/Subjects/Management/bestpractices.aspx
Contains a collection of information relating to best practices in local government programs and management, success stories, and links to several local government awards programs that are an excellent source for best practices information.
Example: Alternative (Non-Tax) Revenue Sources MILL CREEK - In response to projected decline of revenue in the next 5 years, the City began to examine alternative (non-tax) revenue sources in early 1996. For purposes of identifying alternative revenue sources, each department determined how services would be provided if they had to operate without tax dollars (what would the City have to sell, and who would purchase our services, etc.). Although it was recognized that there may be legal, operational, and political problems associated with new non-tax revenue sources, these barriers were not considered as a limitation to generating new ideas. From this activity, a laundry list of alternatives was created. The process of examining for their practicability and cost effectiveness continues.

United Nations - Habitat Best Practices Database
http://www.bestpractices.org
Contains a searchable database from more than 140 countries with over 1600 proven solutions to the common social, economic and environmental problems of an urbanizing world. It demonstrates the practical ways in which public, private and civil society sectors are working together to improve governance, eradicate poverty, provide access to shelter, land and basic services, protect the environment and support economic development.
Example: The Livable Region Strategic Plan (LRSP) - This is Greater Vancouver's official regional growth strategy. It provides the framework for making regional land use and transportation decisions in partnership

with the GVRD's 21 member municipalities, the provincial government and other agencies. The purpose of the plan is to manage population growth, protect and enhance environmental health and quality, create livable and complete communities linked by effective transportation systems through a shared vision and coordinated actions. ...

Web Site of the City of Winston-Salem
http://www.ci.winston-salem.nc.us/ooe/leaders.htm
Contains a thought-provoking article on Innovative Leadership in Performance Management
Introduction: Public Sector Organizations - Today's Innovative Leaders in Performance Management by Dick Grote : This article originally appeared in the Spring 2000 issue of Public Personnel Management, published by the International Personnel Management Association.] Who's coming up with the best new ideas for managing people's performance on the job? Surprisingly, some of the most innovative work in developing new approaches to performance management is being done these days by organizations in the public sector. When executives look for breakthrough thinking and best practices, their best sources frequently turn out to be state agencies and city governments, federal bureaucracies, and your local pardons and parole boards.

PennState
http://www.cardi.cornell.edu/cd_toolbox_2/tools/intermunicipal_coop.cfm
Contains case studies, Community and Economic Development Toolbox and links to information on inter-municipal cooperation and related resources. There's a place in just about every county in New York State where we can step from one jurisdiction to another by crossing the road. Yet, the same services and equipment are maintained by each municipality. Shared service agreements offer opportunities for both local and state road agencies to maximize their resources and save money.
Example of Purchasing Case Study - In 1994 three municipalities in Tompkins County jointly purchased a shoulder machine. The Towns of Lansing and Dryden and Tompkins County purchased the machine after a written agreement was in place. Neither of the towns could afford to purchase the machine alone. The agreement is written in plain English, and all of the municipal attorneys approved it. There is provision for percentage of ownership based on miles of road, maintenance and repairs, scheduling and availability, insurance, settling of disputes, and termination of the agreement.

Michigan's Local Government Web sites: Best Practices
http://www.cyber-state.org/1_0/govt2001/mi_bestpractices.html
Contains best practices reviews of web sites for counties, townships, cities and villages, and uses a binary, 45-point analysis for each site.
Example of Best Practices Web Site Review: - A one-stop-shop site for the e-citizens of Royal Oak, the front page organizes all links in an immediate access format. Also provides a "user survey" to self-assess their services and to get a better understanding of their citizens' requirements for "quality life."

Best Practices Page for City of Vienna
http://www.bestpractices.at/4hub_engl/E4wohnbau_stadterneuerung2.htm
Contains information about good and best practices of the City of Vienna covering issues such as: Housing and Urban Development, Environmental and Infrastructure, The Economy and Employment, Transparent Administration, Participation and Empowerment, Y
Example of Vienna Housing Development Solution - In Vienna, as in many cities, the greatest urban problems are concentrated in those city districts which are most in need of modernization: a high percentage of families with low incomes, deficient infrastructure and high levels of environmental pollution. The City of Vienna decided both against demolition and construction of new urban areas, and against the displacement or compulsory re-housing of those living in such areas. The areas in need of renovation were, instead, improved by applying the methodology of ` user-friendly housing redevelopment". The programme was begun in 1984 and is still being pursued today.
Small Cities Best Practices for Managers Web Site
http://www.smallcities.us/
Contains best practices information for Managers, Mayors and Councils in Cities Under 50,000. The only Abest practice@ newsletter specifically created for growing, small cities...We bridge the worlds of part-time elected officials and full-time professional administrators with easy-to-read, up-to-the minute information, strategies, and advice on the pressing issues and challenges that face local government today. Also provides ABest Practice@ InfoPaks on 18 different topics, ranging from downtown development to council process. InfoPaks come in sets of 5 to 7 articles or case studies on a particular topic, such as: Downtown Development, Council Process, Personnel, Law Enforcement, Historic Preservation, Elected Officials, Citizen Involvement,

Development, Budgeting and Technology.

United States Conference of Mayors (UCSM) Web Site
http://www.usmayors.org/USCM/best_practices/search.asp
Contains a search tool to enable searches of the USCM Best Practices Database. The goal is to help municipal government decision makers find the Best Practices information that is needed quickly and accurately. A search of the words ACouncil Policies@ results in links to 281 web sites containing related information.

Indian and Northern Affairs Canada
http://www.ainc-inac.gc.ca/nr/ecd/par_e.html
Contains information on partnerships with the Aboriginal community and an Aboriginal Economic Development Success Story Database
Examples: Discovery Harbour Centre - The Jewel in First Nations Commercial Ventures - The Campbell River Indian Band (CRIB) in British Columbia has only 600 members. Yet in the past few years, it has managed to make a major impact on the commercial core of Campbell River. The Discovery Harbour Centre, a 37,000-square-metre (400,000- square-foot) open-storefront shopping centre, is the jewel in the crown of the First Nations growing number of commercial ventures. Built on reserve land, this $60-million project is a joint venture between the First Nation and Northwest Real Estate Developments Ltd.

University of Victoria's Local Government Institute
http://web.uvic.ca/lgi/reports/lgi_pub.htm
Contains information on the Local Government Institute and provides access to a wealth of information aimed at improving the efficiency and effectiveness of local governments and in assisting local officials by identifying management practices and production alternatives that have resulted in improved service delivery to local governments in Canada. Provides links to extensive bibliographies.
Examples of articles:

- ✓ Local Government Organization in the Capital Region
- ✓ The Cost of Municipal Elected Officials in the Capital Region of British Columbia
- ✓ The Efficiency of Residential Recycling Services in Canadian Local Governments: National Survey Report
- ✓ Building Organizational Capacity for Performance Measurement: Mile Posts, Toll Booths, and Construction Zones on the Yellow Brick Road
- ✓ Benchmarking Local Government Services in Canadian Municipalities Public Sector Performance and Accountability from a Manager's Perspective
- ✓ Amalgamation: Is it the Solution?

Best Practices Reviews of Local Government
http://www.auditor.leg.state.mn.us/ped/wha-bpr.htm
Contains information on studies of local government best practices that are available on-line and from the Office of the Legislative Auditor of the Minnesota State Government. Topics include: Snow and Ice Control, 911 Dispatching, Fire Services, Preventative Maintenance for Local government Buildings, Local E-Government, Managing Local government Computer Systems, and Preserving Housing.

National Governors Association (NGA)
http://www.nga.org/center/managingforresults/
Contains information on the NGA Center for Best Practices' products and projects related to results-based management across policy areas as well as summaries of selected state activities, links to relevant web sites and references to useful materials produced by other organizations.
Example: Implementing Results-Based Decision-making: Advice from the Field - This is one of two papers that draw on state and community experiences to share lessons learned in bringing a results orientation to community mobilization, strategic planning, budgeting, management and accountability processes. Although the focus of these papers is on child and family policy, the lessons learned and advice given are just as relevant to other policy areas.

Oakvillegreen Web Site
http://www.oakvillegreen.com/
Contains information on conservation and environment-related initiatives.
Examples: Some Communities are beginning to realize that preserving countryside saves taxpayers money! The Town of Pittsfield, New York, purchased 486 hectares of farmland to preserve it from development by

floating a $10-million bond issue. Town planners calculated that providing services and schools for subdivisions on the farmland would cost each taxpayer an additional $200 per year indefinitely, while paying of the bond issue would cost only $67 per year for 20 years. Not only did they save the taxpayers a ton of money, they gained ownership of the farmland! Another example of a community deciding that preservation was worth the money is Barrie, Ontario.

National Partnership for Reinventing Government
http://govinfo.library.unt.edu/npr/library/papers/bkgrd/balmeasure.html
Contains valuable information on best practices in performance management. "Through the establishment of a Community of Practice consortium, local governments learn from each other and can compare outcomes against those of other local governments." This Community of Practice provides a central point for gathering and sharing information on a particular topic.

Association for Conflict Resolution
http://www.acresolution.org/research.nsf/key/EPPbestpractices
Contains information on best practices for government agencies:
Example: Guidelines for Using Collaborative Agreement-Seeking Processes - The guidelines for best practice are proposed by the Society of Professionals in Dispute Resolution for government-sponsored collaborative approaches that seek agreement on issues of public policy. The processes these guidelines address have the following attributes: participants represent stakeholder groups or interests, and not simply themselves; all necessary interests are represented or at least supportive of the discussions; participants share responsibility for both process and outcome; an impartial facilitator; accountable to all participants; manages the process, and the intent is to make decisions through consensus...

City Connections
http://www.cityconnections.com/govr/munresor.html
Contains ideas, innovations and links to best practices information, magazines, and associations.

State of Texas Department of Information Resources
www.dir.state.tx.us/TIC/it_info/bench.htm
Contains links to information on Benchmarking and Best Practices

UNESCO Management of Social Transformations Programme
http://www.unesco.org/most/bphome.htm
Contains information on successful projects related to poverty and social exclusion and provides an extensive best practices database. The idea of a Best Practices Database is based on the observation that carefully documented case histories can provide excellent guidelines for policy making and planning of new projects. The goal of a database on Best Practices is to present and promote creative, successful and sustainable solutions to social problems arising from poverty and social exclusion in order to build a bridge between empirical solutions, research and policy. Best Practices in the database are model projects or policies aimed at improving the quality of life of individuals or groups suffering from poverty or social exclusion. They are typically based on the cooperation between national or local authorities, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and local communities, the private sector, and academic communities. They include a variety of activities in all parts of the world.

The Public Sector Network of the American Society for Quality
http://deming.eng.clemson.edu/pub/psci/psn/best.htm
Contains information on best practices.
Example: Linking Quality to Business Planning and Performance Goals in Local Government By Robert W. Robertson and Paul Gill, District of Maple Ridge, British Columbia - The purpose of this article is two-fold: first, the article presents and discusses data from recent surveys of local governments in Canada, the United Kingdom and the United States. This component of the article will describe the specific challenges that must be addressed in the implementation of TQM at the local government level; and, key components of successful TQM systems. Further, this component will assist in the identification of a series of best practice concepts that may be instructive for other local governments or public sector organizations considering TQM. Second, the article describes in some detail the use of business planning and quality initiatives in the District of Maple Ridge, British Columbia. This case study discusses some of the challenges and opportunities related to the use of business planning and quality at an applied level.

Change Communications Web Site

http://www.change.org/21.htm

Contains links to sites that offer case studies and best practices stories about organizations, initiatives, and methods.

Examples of links to web sites:

- ✓ Alliance for Redesigning Government,
- ✓ Best Practices Of City Governments
- ✓ Best Practices Database
- ✓ Civic Practices Network
- ✓ Enterprise Foundation: Best Practices Database
- ✓ John J. Gunther Blue Ribbon Practices in Community Development
- ✓ National Rural Development Partnership "Success Stories" and "Works in Progress"

Smart Communities Network

http://www.sustainable.doe.gov/management/sstoc.shtml

Contains a large number of sustainable development success stories from communities across the United States--efforts that represent people working to make their communities more livable and their quality of life more enjoyable. Read about a comprehensive plan in Denver that aims to enhance the economy and environment; a grassroots effort in Chicago that saved a transit line and is revitalizing neighborhoods; or a model open-space preservation plan in Philadelphia. The site is a gateway to case studies across the World Wide Web.

Examples: The Vail Environmental Strategic Plan - Describes a program that was adopted to maintain and improve environmental quality in the Vail Valley and to ensure the prolonged economic health of the region. Efforts include monitoring and improving air and water quality, preserving open space, and protecting the areas natural wildlife. Haymount Town Development - Explains a new development that focuses on New Urbanism, a form of planning that puts pedestrians first and focuses on "recapturing the street as a part of the public realm." Only one-third of the 1,650-acre site will be developed; the rest will remain as forested lands, wetlands, and farming areas.

Chadwick Bay Champion Community Strategic Plan

http://www.fredonia.edu/crrdg/chibay.htm

Contains an excellent example of an inter-municipal "community strategic plan" developed by the City of Dunkirk, Towns of Dunkirk, Hanover, Pomfret, Portland and Sheridan, and Villages of Brocton, Fredonia, and Silver Creek through a regional partnership to guide the northern Chautauqua County area into the new millennium.

Muniscope

http://www.muniscope.ca/default.aspx

Contains a collection of more than 9,000 items pulled together to meet the needs of local government officials, provincial policy planners, urban and regional planners, and other professionals interested in municipal issues. It is billed as Canada's finest circulating collection of books, reports, conference proceedings, and articles in a wide range of fields: local economic development, municipal legislation, housing, environment, rural development, transportation studies and initiatives, and urban planning and regulations. Many of Muniscope's documents are difficult to find elsewhere. The focus of the collection is predominantly on Canada and to a lesser extent, the United States. Portions of the site are available only to members and guests. More than a library, this site offers an extensive networking service across Canada.

MUNISOURCE

http://www.munisource.org

Contains extensive links to municipalities and municipal associations throughout the world; access to information on many areas of interest to municipal decision makers; a Local Government Discussion Forum for networking; on-line Certificate Program in Basic HTML originally established to help train municipal employees in web site development; and a wealth of other municipal government related resources.

The International Council for Local Environmental Issues

http://www.iclei.org/infoch.htm#bestpractice

Contains information on the ICLEI organization that was launched in 1990 at the World Congress of Local Governments for a Sustainable Future. More than 430 cities, towns, counties, and their associations

worldwide comprise ICLEI's growing membership. They and hundreds of other local governments are engaged in ICLEI's regional projects and international campaigns. Its mission is to build and serve a worldwide movement of local governments to achieve tangible improvements in global environmental and sustainable development conditions through cooperative, cumulative local actions.

Examples: - Case studies are provided on such areas as: Hazardous Waste, Land Use-Transport, Solid Waste Management, Energy Conservation-Finance, Housing Construction, Environmental Auditing, Transportation Management, Waste Water Management, Electronic Conferencing, Water Conservation, Housing Rehabilitation, and many, many other topics of interest to municipal government.

Appendix "C"

Examples of Inter-Municipal Agreements

Name of Agreement	Partners to Agreement	Purpose of Agreement
Annapolis Royal/ Granville Ferry Joint Water Supply Agreement	Town of Annapolis Royal and Municipality of the County of Annapolis	This agreement provides for joint water supply services among the two municipalities.
Lunenburg County District Planning Commission Wind-Up and Dissolution Agreement	Municipality of the District of Chester, County of Lunenburg and the Town of Mahone Bay	This agreement is for the wind-up of operations of the District Planning Commission and dissolution of the Commission.
Inter-Municipal Services Agreement	Municipality of the District of Chester and the Town of Mahone Bay	This agreement is to provide for a range of services including- General Planning; Development Officer; Technical, Secretarial, and Record Keeping.
Emergency Measures Bylaw Agreement	Town of Bridgewater and Municipality of the District of Lunenburg	A joint Bylaw to provide for a prompt and coordinated response to a state of local emergency.
Joint Emergency Measures Organization Agreement	Town of Bridgewater and the Municipality of the District of Lunenburg	The purpose of this agreement is to provide for a coordinated response to emergencies in both the Town and the Municipality.
Inter-Municipal Services - Kings Transit Authority Agreement	The Town of Berwick, the Town of Kentville, the Town of Wolfville and the Municipality of the County of Kings	This agreement provides public transportation services for the County of Kings – Section 55 of the Municipal Government. Act.
"Lunenburg-Mahone Bay RCMP Service Agreement"	Town of Lunenburg and the Town of Mahone Bay	In 2000 the towns of Lunenburg and Mahone Bay disbanded their inter-municipal police force. The inter-municipal service agreement served as a basis for negotiating the transfer of policing responsibility to the RCMP which was finalized in 2000. For further information contact: Bea Renton, Town Manager: explorelunenburg@ns.sympatico.ca

NS Municipal Electric Cooperative Agreement	Towns of Lunenburg, Mahone Bay, Berwick, Canso, Antigonish and the Community of Riverport	This agreement provides a means of coordinating certain areas of electrical service provision, including: electric utility rates and purchasing, regulatory policies and approvals, and technological advancements. For further information contact: Bea Renton, Town Manager: explorelunenburg@ns.sympatico.ca
Inter-Municipal Fire Services Agreement	Town of Lunenburg and Districts 1 and 2 Fire Commissions	This agreement provides for a comprehensive management and budgetary system for the delivery of fire services for the two municipal jurisdictions. For further information contact: Bea Renton, Town Manager: explorelunenburg@ns.sympatico.ca
Bluenose Atlantic Coastal Action Program Agreement	Lunenburg County Municipal elected and appointed officials and Federal and Provincial representatives	The agreement is to provide for a range of services concerned with coastal and inland water resource protection and conservation. For further information contact: Bea Renton, Town Manager: explorelunenburg@ns.sympatico.ca
Planning Services Sharing Agreement"	Town of Amherst and the Town of Parrsboro	This agreement is for the provision of planning and GIS Services.
Joint RCMP Policing Services Facilities Agreement	The Town of Middletown and the Municipality of the County of Annapolis	This agreement provides the financial arrangements for blended RCMP services between the two municipalities.
Tax Sharing Agreement	The Municipality of the County of Annapolis and the Municipality of the District of Digby	This agreement provides for both municipalities to share commercial property taxes. The tax will be paid to Annapolis County by the Digby-Annapolis Development Corporation (DADC).
The Wide Blue Line Agreement	Town of New Glasgow and the Town of Westville	This agreement is for the towns of New Glasgow and Westville to share municipal services such as: police, animal control public works, and recreation.
Waste Disposal Agreement	Municipality of the District of Lunenburg, Town of Bridgewater, Town of Lunenburg, and the Town of Mahone Bay	This agreement is to provide an effective method of disposing waste from the four municipalities. The disposal site is jointly owned by each of the participating municipalities.

Waste Disposal Site Ownership Agreement	Municipality of the District of Lunenburg, Town of Bridgewater, Town of Lunenburg, Town of Mahone Bay, and the Municipality of the District of Chester	This agreement documents the Waste Disposal Site's ownership provisions and stipulates that each owner must comply with the site's regulations for waste collection.
Inter-Municipal Emergency Services Agreement	Municipality of the County of Pictou and the towns of New Glasgow, Pictou, Trenton, Stellarton and Westville.	This agreement provides for a coordinated response to an emergency occurring within the six municipalities.
Joint administration and enforcement of the "Building Code Act " Agreement	Town of Springhill and Town of Parrsboro	This agreement provides for the joint administration and enforcement of the Building Code Act and for the establishment of a joint Committee of Management.